

DESCRIPTION OF A CALIFORNIA SPECIES OF CTESIAS (DERMESTIDAE)

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The dermestid beetle genus *Ctesias* Stephens includes at the present only two species, *C. serra* (Fabricius) in Europe and *C. variegata* Arrow in Africa. A species of *Ctesias* also occurs in California. Although but one specimen is known, its structural characteristics seem distinct enough to warrant its description as a new species. It is hoped that its description at this time will stimulate interest leading to additional collections and to a study of its biology.

Ctesias dusmae Beal, new species

Adult male.—Color of head black; pronotum dark brown; elytra brown; thorax brown; legs and abdomen yellowish brown. Pubescence of dorsal surfaces medium fine, short, subrecumbent, piceous; pubescence of ventral surfaces fine, short, recumbent, piceous. Punctuation of dorsal surfaces shallow and simple with individual punctures no larger than facet of eye; punctures of frons separated by one to two diameters of one puncture becoming more sparse on vertex with surface between microscopically rugose; punctures of disc of pronotum and disc of elytra separated by two to four diameters of one puncture with surface between shining and smooth. Antenna with configuration as illustrated; antennal club moderately densely clothed with very short and fine, recumbent, black pubescence. Antennal fossa with posterior diagonal margin extending only half length of fossa leaving lateral half of fossa open behind; surface of floor of fossa densely, microscopically punctate. Epipleuron ending before hind margin of metepimeron, transversely flat for most of length but slightly concave on anterior third. Length (of pronotum and elytra): 4.4 mm.; width (across humeri): 1.9 mm.

Holotype male (deposited in the California Academy of Sciences): Yosemite Valley, California, July 7, 1921 (Van Dyke Collection).

This species is placed in the genus *Ctesias* by the form of the antennal club, which consists of three large triangular segments, and by the structure of the prothoracic hypomeron. The antennal fossa is deeply excavated and occupies all of the hypomeron except for two small medial triangular areas on each side of the fossa.

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The most obvious difference between *C. serra* and *C. dusmae* is the proportionately greater length to width of the latter. A fundamental difference is found in the structure of the antennal fossa. In both sexes of *C. serra* the fossa is completely closed behind by a knifelike carina. In the male of *C. dusmae* the fossa is broadly open behind, the posterior carina extending only to a point opposite the basal two fifths of the lateral margin of the pronotum. An apparent difference between the two species is in the color of the elytra. The single known specimen of *C. dusmae* has medium brown elytra which contrast rather sharply with the black head. Whether specimens may ever be dark brown or black remains to be discovered. All specimens of *C. serra* which I have studied have black elytra, or, if the elytra are dark brown, they are at least as dark as the head. A difference between the species is also found in the proportionate widths to lengths of the segments of the antennal club.²

C. variegata is described³ as having the elytra marked by transverse bands of coarse, white pubescence, a character not found in the other two species of the genus. The segments of the antennal club of *C. variegata* are proportionately much wider than those of either *C. serra* or *C. dusmae*.

C. dusmae may be a scavenger on the order of many other dermestid beetles. However, the habits of the other members of the genus suggest the possibility of a predatory role for this species. *C. serra* has been recorded as preying on the eggs and immature stages of the gypsy moth, *Lymantria dispar*.⁴ *C. variegata* has been recorded from mantid egg cases.⁵

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FIGURE 1. Male antenna of *Ctesias dusmae*, new species.

² The male antenna of *C. serra* is figured by Mroczkowski, 1954, *Polski Zwiasek Entom.*, 19 (52):29.

³ Kalík, 1955, *Rev. Zool. Bot. Afr.*, 52:317-318.

⁴ Hinton, 1945, *Beetles associated with stored products*, 1:241.

⁵ Kalík, *op. cit.*